

DARK DESCENT

By Otto Maddox

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IN SIMPLER TERMS, JUST BECAUSE YOU READ IT DOES NOT MAKE IT RIGHT. THE CHARACTERS IN THIS STORY ARE SOME SERIOUSLY JACKED UP, MENTAL WHACK-JOBS WHO ARE NOT ONLY DEMENTED BUT REALLY SHOULD JUST BE TOOK OUT AND SHOT IF THEY WERE IN FACT, REAL PEOPLE. THIS STORY IS WRITTEN AS A FORM OF HORRIFIC FICTION AND NOT INTENDED TO DIGNIFY THE ACTS OF THE CHARACTERS OR TO INTENTIONALLY TITILLATE OR SEXUALLY GRATIFY THE READER.

PRELUDE

HD 28185-C a planet orbiting the star HD 28185 some 138 light-years from Earth, was originally located in June of 2067 by the scientific team operating the JOESOP [Joint Orbital Extra-Solar Observational Platform] space-based observatory. With its exceptionally long-range capabilities, the orbital JOESOP was able to detect not only the planet's mass, which is some six times that of the Earth, but it was also able to image the planet and determine its atmospheric content, which, to the shock of the world's scientific community, indicated that not only was water in abundance on its surface, but it also appeared to have many greenhouse gases and high oxygen content... all the tell-tale signs of an Earth-like planet. Plant life was obvious under close analysis and much of the planet's visible surface indicated expansive sections of thick and primordial vegetation. Given the designation HABITAT 5, this planet became the fifth planet to be detected that could support human life. It was the first and to date, the ONLY world identified with absolute surety to contain specific Earthlike climate, orbit, rotation, and fully habitable atmospheric conditions. But with the world some 138 light-years away, visitation seemed unlikely. The planet became a scientific oddity and quickly faded from the news not long after its discovery. But with the natural disasters of 2092 which ravaged the entire Pacific Rim and with the human population quickly approaching the 12 billion mark, the Earth itself was running out of room and resources. Oceanic habitation had been the first approach to dealing with population problems. Construction of vast off-shore platforms allowed for gigantic expansions of human dwelling, but when the Ring of Fire in the

Pacific erupted in cataclysmic proportions in 2092, vast sections of these platforms and habitats were completely destroyed, killing millions. It was immediately determined that sea-based colonies were not safe. Quick to respond to this new gap in human living, the company known as ORBITAL FUTURE sprang into being, speedily constructing a massive space station in near-Earth orbit that could house thousands, complete with self-provisional means including hydroponics and recycling. But the station was still dependent on Earth for materials and supplies. It was not the answer. In October of 2111, after a series of mass riots worldwide over food and resources nearly toppled several major governments, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, in a historical speech before the combined UN Assembly, called out to the world governments and people to lay down their differences and reach for the stars before the Earth crumbled beneath us.

"In a time when Europe was a place of misery and death, it was Great Britain and her people who pressed forth into the waves of the Atlantic, plying the unknown with little more than wooden ships and canvas sails and by the Grace of God, our feet eventually settled upon the firm soil of the New World...and where meager colonies sprouted, a great nation would one day stand...a nation that would later save Europe from itself and go on to drag much of our civilization from the mud and dirt. Perhaps it is time that the people of Great Britain once again throw caution to the wind in the name of survival and freedom. But with no oceans left to ply...it is the Heavens we must look to. Out there, across the great unknown of space, lies a world simply called HD 28185-C. The scientists have named it Habitat 5. But today, I name it THE NEW WORLD. Let us lay down our differences, our petty arguments...let us for one moment in our

history, think not as nations or races...but as a species. Let us look together up at the stars and know that it is our destiny to reach them or we shall surely perish here on our overcrowded little world. Space is no longer a side-note of science, my friends...space is our destiny...our only hope. It is the only option we have left to us before we fall in upon ourselves. I would rather die a thousand deaths in the cold depths of space trying to reach the unreachable than to fall once at the hands of my own brethren fighting over scraps of bread and sand. Let us go now into the darkness together, while we still have hope...still have a chance. This world is reputedly six times the size of our Earth...imagine the resources, the space...the discoveries to be made! To set our feet on that world will ensure our species survives even if this old Earth does not. She is our home...she is our mother...but she grows frail and weak and with so many of us to feed, surely we cannot expect her to hold out much longer. I tell you that we have no choice but to reach out to the Heavens and grasp at something new. Great Britain has, at my order, placed all her available reserves at the disposal of our space engineers. We will build a craft capable of reaching Habitat 5...and we will set our boots upon her soil or we will die trying. I ask you...all of you...who will come with us? Who of you will remain here till you die...and whom among you will cast off the trappings of ancient and ridiculous hatreds and join hands with us? Who among you will show bravery enough to press out into the darkness in the name of survival and discovery? Our ancestors charted the unknown in wooden ships with nothing more than the stars to guide them...and it is those same stars which now beckon to us...to once more charge out into the unknown. We have the technology...we have the resources...it only the determination which we lack. The future

can be saved...but only if we act now...decisively...together ...and with utter and unfettered determination. It is said that man emerged from a great garden created by God...and I say unto you...a great garden awaits us...perhaps set there by the hand of God himself. But it is not a gift...it must be earned and if we are to live on as a species...we must reach out and seize this Eden...and make our own. Let us go forth as a united front and take our place in the heavens...let us go forth and chart the unknown once more. Let us remember what it is about mankind that has allowed us to survive as a species...it is in our very nature, to seek the unknown and to conquer it...to overcome obstacles and to build anew. To sit here in rot in our own waste is to abandon who and what we are. Let us once again have pride in our species...in ourselves as a civilization. And even if we fail in this endeavor, it shall not be said we did not try...it will not be said of humanity that she crawled into her own pit of despair in her final moments of existence. No, my friends, it will be said that humanity went down standing on her own feet and staring into the eye of the unknown, daring, as she always has, to beat down the beast called the impossible!"

---Prime Minister Gordon Cromwell

October 12, 2111 before the combined General Assembly of the United Nations.

The Prime Minister received the first full standing ovation for a delegate in the Assembly in nearly sixty years. But with little in the way of available resources, most nations had no ability to aid the British plan. The Pan-Asian alliance and the United States were the only two powers capable of supporting the plan and neither could achieve the funding to construct the massive orbital facility needed to build the colonization craft. In

December 2111, under pressure from his own directives, Prime Minister Cromwell petitioned the ORBITAL FUTURE Corporation for permission to utilize its station for ship construction. When the company delivered the inevitable, "NO," Cromwell placed a call to the President of the United States and was reputed to have said only a single sentence. "We will survive...you can either come with us...or stand in our way and we'll roll over you, Yanks."

On January 10, 2112, under orders from Prime Minister Cromwell, elements of specially trained British Royal Marines assaulted the ORBITAL FUTURE station and seized it in the name of Great Britain. The battle lasted less than twenty minutes in what would become known as the War for the World. Several hundred security personnel were killed and within hours, elements of the United States military took efforts to contain any response from ORBITAL FUTURE by occupying its Earth-side launch facilities.

On January 11th, at noon, in the White House Rose Garden, Prime Minister Cromwell and President Miller appeared before the international press corps and released the following statement:

"As governments by the people and for the people, it is our responsibility to ensure the safety, security, and futures of our people. If the private sector will not cooperate and will not aid in these matters, then our governments shall take whatever necessary steps are required to ensure their cooperation and to that end, should it result in the use of force, there shall be no one to blame but the uncooperative companies who would dare to stand in the way of our future and our continued security. In

these times we do not budget a luxury of buying assistance. For those greed barons who would sooner see humanity die than lose a dime, we shall see how history judges them. As for us, let the historians say we let nothing stop us from survival...let them say we broke our own laws ...let them say we were unjust...but they shall not say we stood by and did nothing while our world died. To those who would stand in the way of our mission, we shall consider you enemies of humanity and your purpose shall be to kill our species. You will not be tolerated or shown mercy. Walk with us...or fall beneath our boots...but our march to Habitat-5 will go forward."

Overnight, the entire private sector world-wide, volunteered themselves in the efforts to further the British plan to build a colonization fleet. The creation of the COLONY CORPORATION, a combination of British, Chinese, and American companies under the direct control of the three nation's governments, was signed into life, thus giving existence to the largest single entity ever, not considered an actual government. With the stroke of a few pens, COLONY CORP created a united face and front for the entire concept of saving humanity and in doing so, it became the most powerful force in human history. Cooperate or be made to cooperate. There were no options, no haggling over prices or deadlines. COLONY CORP was on a mission to save mankind from itself...and it would roll over anyone who got in the way.

By March of 2112, construction of the NINA, PINTA, and the SANTA MARIA were well underway from the docks of the newly named CROMWELL STATION. These three ships would be the first wave of humanity to be launched toward Habitat 5. Bearing newly created engines that utilized a scientific

breakthrough in engineering called the TITAN PULSE DRIVE, a gravitational wonder designed by an MIT graduate and literal genius, Doctor Joseph Stone, these vessels would be able to reach somewhat over the speed of light, making the trip to Habitat in less than 100 years. Utilizing E-Catalyzer systems for power, these ships would be capable of sustained flight to Habitat and back, but with the time required for the trips, it was assumed these vessels would deteriorate physically before making multiple trips. It was assumed that any trip out...might be the only one. There would be no turning around...no coming back and even if you did, the Earth you might return to would be 200 years older and most likely dead and gone. It was a one way trip, but despite these odds, military personnel from all three nations volunteered in droves, vying for the chance to be in the colonization force that would be deployed to the world first...their mission to set human boots into Habitat 5's soil and to erect a secure facility on the surface from which incoming colonists could be processed and harbored. Theirs was to be a mission of conquest.

By early 2114, construction of the military vessels was complete and amidst great hope and fanfare, they were launched with a combined force of 30,000 troops...10,000 from each of the partnered nations...the best trained and equipped forces that could be mustered. Construction of the colonial ships was already underway before the first military vessel had fired its engines.

The COLONY CORP plan called for a two year gap before launch of the colonial fleet. This would give the military time to establish forts on the new world before civilians began to arrive. So by 2116, a larger and more elaborate fleet of 4 ships, named,

THE CORTEZ, COLUMBUS, PIZZARO, and the CORONADO were ready to go. These ships launched with a combined force of 50,000 civilians and 12,000 + crews, per ship in October of 2116 in what would become called, "The Second Wave."

In 2117 the third wave of colonists launched aboard four more vessels named THE DRAKE, BALBOA, DESOTO, and THE MAGELLAN. This is the time in which our story begins. It has been five years since the British seized the orbital station and three years since the colonization of Habitat 5 began. For five years now, COLONY CORP has been running the whole of Earth, deciding ultimately, who gets to leave the planet...and live...and who will remain behind and likely perish as food and resources slowly dwindle. What once was hope is now turning into anger as the masses of Earth realize only the elite and the military are getting to leave. As they are taxed into submission to fund the massive space programs, the average Joes are beginning to realize they toil not for themselves or even for their children but for whomever COLONY CORP determines to be the best and brightest. While this is an obvious and logical step and in no way intended to be detrimental, COLONY CORP is now quickly becoming a hated entity and violent rebellion against it is growing. Conspiracy rumors abound, and anyone opposing the programs of the Corporation are jailed without trial. It is a tedious time for mankind, a time in which those in power are having to take unpopular steps to ensure the survival of humanity as a whole. While their actions are taken with moral intent, they are often dark and terrible acts in and of themselves. And it remains the right of every human to ensure their own survival. No one truly is right or wrong in this future...it is just a means to an end. People will live...people will fight...people will die...people will reach out with all the might

they possess in order to ensure their own survival and the survival of their children. History will judge who among them were the righteous.

CHAPTER ONE

"Under conditions of tyranny it is far easier to act than to think."

- **Hannah Arendt**, *A Certain World*

The Magellan was one of the largest mobile mechanisms ever devised and constructed. The ships in the first wave, carrying the marines of three nations aboard them had been only a third the size of the mighty Magellan and her sister ships in the third wave. Under pressure from the public, Colony Corporation had been forced for the most part, into redesigning each wave's fleet to house more and more people. Where the military ships had held only 10,000 each...the second wave ships had held 62,000 each and now with the Magellan and her armada, the numbers had been pushed to 75,000...12,000 crew and 63,000 civilians total for each of the four massive ships. The designs had been enlarged, the engines and drive sizes increased and of course more cryogenic containment tanks had been added to the original designs to accommodate the extra payload, but the results had begun to stress the maintenance crews. Each vessel was more than four miles in total length, coming in at around 21,000 feet with a width of 1,100 feet and height of nearly 1000 feet...two huge primary engines firing out gravitational thrust, the ship could attain a speed of just over 200,000 miles per second. Keeping the ship operational though, was a constant battle for both crews and systems. An electrical

short wasn't just a matter of changing a fuse in a panel...it could literally involve travel for a maintenance team that could take them hours as they navigated the 17 decks of the ship. To make maintenance crew movement faster and easier, the third wave ships had been designed with a core in them...a gigantic open shaft that ran from one of the ship to the other, allowing expedited and unimpeded travel for service personnel. All primary and secondary ship systems were also routed electrically through the core making replacement or repair easier. But stepping into the core was a site that made more than a few puke their guts out. The massive shaft was nearly a 150 feet in diameter and 20,000 feet long. The end of the tunnel could literally not be seen by the human eye and it appeared to be a channel that simply shrunk perpetually into the distance. To make matters more disturbing, the core had its own gravitational center created through a series of Stone generators, meaning gravity was different than the rest of the ship and could shift differentially depending on what part of the core you were in. This was done so that during replacement of extremely heavy equipment, gravity could be turned down or off entirely, making movement of the equipment easier for crews. Stone generators were also used to operate lift and elevator trains within the core for crew travel. So stepping out into the core itself was disorienting not only because of its immense size, but also because of its odd gravitational anomalies. By the time the Magellan's construction was completed, she had more than a few vomit stains lacing the walls of her central core.

Adrian Powell was only 20 when she received her acceptance to Colony Corporation's Habitat-5 program. Having

graduated high school, she'd immediately joined the Navy in hopes of escaping her hometown in Alabama.

Increasing hurricanes and flooding along the Gulf Coast has ravaged what was left of the Southern economy and jobs were literally mythical beasts by 2115 when she finished school. Living in a two bedroom mobile home with her parents and three brothers had not been the greatest environment and getting out was her priority since she'd been 12. The Navy offered her the chance to do that. After completing advanced technical training, her commander has asked her where she wanted to be stationed. She'd replied, "Anywhere but Alabama."

When her orders arrived and instructed her she'd be assigned, on loan, to the Colony Corporation for the Habitat-5 mission, she'd been stunned beyond words. She only wanted out of Alabama and never dreamed she'd end up literally in space. Initially she'd assumed she'd be helping construct one of the gigantic colony ships or working aboard Cromwell Station, but as it turned out, she'd actually been assigned to one of the ships as a crewman.

The thought of leaving home hadn't been so bad when she'd drove off with her Navy recruiter at the age of 18...but now faced with the prospect that she'd never see her family, her home, or even her planet again, was starting to wage a war of fear within her soul. How she could hate something and fear losing it at the same time was beyond her ability to comprehend. In the end, she chose to follow her orders and accept her mission. People were literally killing each other for a chance to be on a colony ship...and here she was actually debating refusal of an offer to be on one. Earth was dying and mankind was killing it. There was really no option in it for her or anybody else. The scientists were all still arguing over how long

the planet had left...estimates ranging from fifty years to two hundred, but all of them agreed she was two steps from the grave and when she went...she would take everyone with her. The massive eruptions in the Pacific in 2092 has proven Mother Nature could kick our asses when she felt like it. When the dust and waves had settled, California was gone...parts of Alaska...Mexico...simply no longer existed and beach front property could be found as far inland as Reno, Nevada. Across the Pacific, nations like Japan, the Koreas, Philippines, Cambodia, Vietnam, and most of Indonesia and New Guinea...simply ceased to exist. The Scientists called it the Ring of Fire, a literal volcanic seabed...a series of faults which encircled the entire Pacific Ocean. Eruptions and earthquakes were normal, but some pivotal motion somewhere deep in the planet's crust had ultimately triggered a series of connected quakes and the resulting cataclysmic eruptions and tsunamis that exploded from the ocean engulfed and demolished the lives and property of hundreds of millions of people. The survivors of Japan had been taken in by the Chinese, an act that had served to temper the Chinese tensions with the West. Other groups had not been so lucky. Refugees from Vietnam and Cambodia had been massacred by Myanmar and Thai troops as they tried to enter their countries. The governments simply couldn't feed or house them...and when they refused them permission to cross the border, violence had erupted and abruptly ended with troops firing into massive waves of refugees until no one remained standing. It was then that people said the end of times had begun.

Adrian's parents had met and gotten married that same year while working in Nevada to assist California survivors. In 2094, when the government funded resettlement programs were cut, they'd returned home to Alabama where her older

brother Malcolm had been born. A few years later in 2097, she'd been born, followed closely by two more brothers.

She remembered asking her mother once why she and her father had decided to have children with no steady jobs, a thrown together home, and little to no chance of a future for any of them. Her mother had stared at her with a gaze of dismay that quickly faded into something more steely and cold.

"The day we refuse to create children...is the day mankind will die...we only live for a short time, Adrian...to leave no mark behind is a literal sin, girl. Your father and I had big dreams and none of them have come to fruit. You and your brothers are the only mark we'll ever make on this world. You get out of here and you make something of yourself...you make a mark on history and it will serve all of us. If you can't succeed in life...then it's your duty, your obligation to see to it that your children succeed or otherwise your life ain't worth shit."

The very next day she'd went off to see the Navy recruiter. Her grades hadn't been good enough to get into college and with no job and no scholarships she didn't even have a chance to get through a vocational school. And her looks weren't anything to talk about. She was scrawny and wiry, barely B-cup tits and her big nose was the only distinguishing characteristic about her. She wasn't ugly but she'd never marry money, that was a given. So the military was about the only offer she had available. Two years in, and she was getting assigned to the largest project in human history...the literal colonization of another planet.

Her mother had cried when she called to tell her, but the woman had stoned herself and told her daughter to do it. Adrian could still remember how deliberate her mother's words had been.

“You’ve got a chance to make a mark, Adrian. You do it...you do it for me...for your father...for your brothers and you do it for yourself. Don’t you die here with us if you’ve got a ticket out. Don’t you cry and don’t you look back. Don’t you dare regret it. You get on that damn big ship and you go, child...go do what we won’t never get to do.”

She’d hung up crying herself and she’d cried for days after the conversation. Hell, she’d been crying when they ushered her aboard the Starlifter space plane bound for Cromwell station, and to her shock she wasn’t the only one. Nearly a hundred people had been aboard the plane when it took off and not a dry eye anywhere. Even the crew of the craft appeared to be teary. Everyone knew that once you boarded Cromwell there was no coming back except in shackles...not that anybody ever came back. It was sad and it was painful to leave...but no one in their right mind was going to give up the chance to go.

Adrian had hoped for a tour of the station or at least the ship, but all she’d gotten on arrival was a gun pointed at her as they ordered her to strip down along with about sixty other women. After they were all naked, a technician had entered the room and informed them that they were all assigned to third ship rotation ...meaning they would all be placed in cryogenic suspension for the first thirty years of the trip. Then they would be awakened and swap shifts with the second crew. Out of 10,000 crew members, 1,000 would be awake at all times, meaning with rotations, each member would serve one ten year tour before going back into cryogenic suspension for the remainder of the trip. Originally she’d been told the crews would serve 2 year tours five times, but apparently most people had simply wanted to pull their tour and be done with it. You were going to lose 10 years of your life either way and since you supposedly didn’t dream in cryogenic sleep, it was going to

seem like you were serving ten years consecutively anyway. It sort of made sense to her to just get it over with. But she worried what thirty years in stasis would do to her. She'd heard mention of things like "the Creep," as the technicians called it. Cryogenic suspension slowed the body's aging down to 10 percent normal. This meant basically that for every year in cryo, you physically would age one month. So the 100 year trip to Habitat-5 would age you approximately 8 years in actual physical depreciation. The Creep was the condition used to refer to the human body's ability to adapt and adjust to conditions presented by the cryogenic containment system. Essentially the body would grow accustomed to a certain amount of nutrients and begin to adapt to it. In most cases, as long as a proper amount of nourishment was pumped into the body, it would maintain the exact weight and muscle tone that it had when the person entered suspension. But over longer periods of time, the body would adjust itself to make best use of the nutrient mixture and this would end up causing weight gain in most cases. The body, trying to utilize all that it was receiving, would shut down processing of wastes and begin to conserve nutrients in the form of fat cells. Because of the slowed metabolism, the buildup of fat usually would occur only on the torso as the body would tend to not waste energy moving the nutrients to other parts of the body. The cyro-techs had warned them not be shocked if you woke up with a pudgy belly and flabbier ass than you went to sleep with.

"It's nothing to really worry about...we monitor everyone visually and the computer systems keep tabs on everyone, but we don't like to diddle with nutrient settings. If we turn them too low we can literally starve you to death or cause further problems. So we generally side with giving you more than you need than depriving you. Essentially, it's better to have you

wake up with a spare-tire than to have you not wake up at all.” At least that’s the line they fed them during orientation as they had herded her and her sixty odd associates into the cryo prepping room.

Several tubes in orifices later, she’d been neatly put to sleep in a dreamless state that would last until the year 2144, year 27 of the Magellan’s voyage to Habitat-5.

“Adrian...Adrian Powell...can you hear me? Wake up Adrian,” the voice was coming from somewhere but she couldn’t quite figure out where. And there was a bright light hurting her eyes. She couldn’t open them fully.

“Wakey, wakey...c’mon...snap to, soldier,” a distinctly male voice now involved itself in her dream. “Open your eyes or we’re gonna be here all damn day, woman.”

Through sheer force of will, she blinked her eyelids open and tried to focus. After several seconds, she realized she was staring upward at what had to be the brightest fucking light she’d ever known in her life.

“Turn...turn it off,” she rasped through dry lips that didn’t seem to want to speak for her.

“Tell me your name and I’ll turn it off,” the first voice...a woman’s voice, offered from somewhere.

“Adrian Powell...US Navy...technician first class,” she replied and then fumbled for her social security number. “Fuck...I can’t remember my ID number.”

The light flicked off and she felt hands on her naked body pulling her upright on whatever padded table she was lying on.

“Don’t sweat it sugar...your brain has been doing not much of nothing for twenty seven years...it takes it a while to get back up to speed. You’re doing good to remember your name. Some

come through it can't recall anything for days. We'll get some candy in you and it'll start popping again. The sugar seems to jack your brain up some...so don't skimp on the lovely white powder over the next week or so, 'kay? The woman seemed less gruff than the man had.

Her eyes were finally starting to work right and she seemed able to see better as she sat atop the exam table.

"Did you say...twenty seven years?" she asked the woman, who she could now tell was a cryo-tech from her white jumpsuit. She was also somewhat frumpy and unkept, her hair frizzy and uncombed.

"That's what I said...welcome back to the world, hun."

"I'm on third crew...not supposed to be awake yet," she commented as she sipped some water from a cup the man handed her.

"That would be my doing," he said as she turned and focused on him. He was a big guy whom she'd never seen before and he was wearing a green jumpsuit...military. "I'm Lieutenant Bolen, Chief Engineer, Decks R through Q...and you my dear, are my new conduit technician."

"What?"

"I'm on second rotation...but my assigned technician had a bit of an accident of sorts, so I need somebody...and that would be you I'm afraid...you drew short straw in the database, so you're gonna serve three years with me and then follow through with your regular 10 year tour. I know that sucks and I apologize, but I gotta have somebody and the computer said you were the one."

"Aw fuck," she muttered as she slid off the edge of the bed to stand up and then realized her legs didn't hold her a second too late. The deck floor was hard and cold and not friendly to

her face. "Shit," she cursed as she attempted lamely to pick herself up.

"Why do they always do that...damn," the woman grumbled as she bent over to help the Lieutenant get her back up onto the table.

"Your legs haven't worked in twenty seven years...don't expect them to take off immediately," the officer snickered. "Sorry for being in here with you, I know it's against protocol, but I wanted you to hear the suck-ass news from the asshole who cast the order. I'm glad you're taking it fairly well."

"Three extra ain't bad...twenty...twenty and it would'a been you on the floor sir," she said, trying to force a smile despite her busted lip.

"Alright tiny...I'm out of here...the tech will keep you here till you can walk and talk okay and then she'll send you down the hall to the quartermaster's office...they'll issue you some clothing and equipment and then I'll have somebody show you around the ship and crew quarters. But I need you working within 48 hours, okay?"

"Yes sir," she replied with a half-hearted nod. It was about that point, as she was nodding, that her eyes focused down at her body and she realized immediately something was not right. "What the fuck...well holee shit!"

"And that...I leave to you to explain, boss," Bolen chirped as he patted the technician on the shoulder and promptly made a line for the door.

"Oh calm down, fuck," the woman muttered as she lifted a scanner and aimed it at her. "Records indicate you were five two and one hundred pounds when you went in...you're now five two and one hundred fourteen pounds. Act like you done tipped the scales or something...shit."

“My belly,” Adrian gasped as she poked at her stomach with both index fingers.

“Your body is lazy...when you reduce nutrient intake, it starts to adapt and store...and it stores it in the nearest location... the abdomen. Deal with it...at least you can blame it on the Creep. Look at me...all I can say is I’m lazy,” she added, unzipping the front of her jumpsuit and showing off her own plump body.

“Whoa, okay...my vision was good till that,” she said with a fake cough. “Geez...zip it up lady.”

“Man you’re in for a bit of culture shock.”

“What do you mean by that?”

“We’re cooped up on this thing...one thousand of us for ten years...it gets a little freaky after the first year or two. People pair off then break up...pair off again. After about five years, people just start fucking whenever and whoever for something to do. Get used to seeing nudity, babe...you’re not waking up into a crew full of newbies...you’re joining a crew full of half-stir crazy people.”

“I thought we were supposed to have access to entertainment and a gym and stuff...what the fuck?”

The technician zipped her suit back up and grinned. “There’s only so many movies and shows to watch and after a while working out just loses its appeal. We get beamed in news and media from Earth daily, but nobody really wants to watch the news...especially when most of it is twenty seven years out of date. So you got a limited amount of things to do in your spare time...you can fuck, you can eat, or you can go bananas and hang yourself.”

“Oh shit...I heard rumors they were worried about that,” Adrian acknowledged as she rubbed at her swollen lip.

"First few years weren't bad...but by five, bitches start going a little nutty...in fact, the girl you're replacing...hung herself about a month ago using some wiring she cut out of a wall monitor."

"Oh shit...the El-tee said she had an accident."

"She's electrical engineering...it involved wire...they wrote it up as an accident...it happens a lot toward the end of a crew rotation, so the officers have all taken to lying about shit to keep crew moral from getting to bad."

"Yay," she said with a solemn tone, more gasp than exclamation. "I'm replacing Suicide Sally."

"Don't tell the Lieutenant that I told you. I'm only saying what I'm saying so you don't get culture shock when you walk out that door there."

"Thanks, I think." Eyeing her belly and poking at it some more, she had to ask, "Is this gonna go away?"

The technician laughed out loud before answering.

"You want the truth or the shit they tell me to tell you?"

"Both I guess," she replied, staring at the woman with wide and horrified eyes.

"Hit the gym and as your body's metabolism speeds up, the excess tissue will immediately begin to break down and dissolve," she said in a monotone impression of a man's voice. "But the truth is," she continued in her own voice, "that just the opposite happens for the first year or so. Your body goes through a sort of shock. I mean you got minimal intake and then all of a sudden you're awake and eating normally again. Your body is a lot like a camel. Camel lives in the desert so it drinks when it can and stores water for when it can't. Your body is used to having to use every bit of nutrient it can get from being in cryo...and now you're gonna start eating normally again...and it's gonna be like the camel at the oasis. Your body

will continue to store as much as it can till it decides you're not in starvation anymore. Some bitches it takes a few weeks for... and others a few months. Me, I'm still packing it on with no reason. Cutting down on what you eat won't help either...in fact it just makes it worse. I can give you some steroids and some other shit to boost up your metabolism, but it's gonna make you eat like a horse and that'll just pack it on too."

Adrian suddenly felt afraid that her body was no longer going to be normal. She'd always been thin and small and she couldn't imagine actually getting fat for real. Her round little belly was one thing, but what if she got even fatter? The concept was not something she wanted to entertain.

"Your body will pop out of it on its own. Just set yourself some sort of regular schedule of eating and exercise and stick with it for a few months. Your metabolism will eventually figure out you're getting enough food and water, and it'll stop hoarding it. When it goes, it'll go all at once. Diarrhea, peeing a lot...lack of appetite...all the tell-tale signs of the metabolism adjusting, so don't shit a brick if it hits you hard."

"Oh," the woman added as she approached her with a syringe. "I'm giving you a birth control shot...it's good for six months. You get the next one on your own, got it? You come up pregnant and they WILL make you abort, got it? Ten years...lot of women like me got ticking time clocks...the urge to procreate can get overwhelming at times and honestly I think it's one of the reasons some end up with wire around their necks. The girl you're replacing...got knocked up last year...they made her abort it...and she couldn't handle the grief of it. So you take your shots...and you keep your wits, got it?"

"Yes m'am," she answered, nodding her head as the needle hit her arm and penetrated.

"You said that with a twang...where the hell are you from? South I'm guessing, eh?"

"Yes m'am...Alabama actually," she replied.

"Bad down there...you have family there still?"

"Yes m'am."

"When you get a chance...check the news feeds... 'bout four or five years ago, right after I came out of cryo myself, there was a monster hurricane down there, lot of damage...lot of dead."

The Quartermaster's room was more or less a tiny office consisting of a desk and single computer terminal. A door beyond the desk led back into what appeared to be a storage compartment lined with racks and shelving that extended quite some distance.

She felt odd standing out in the open in nothing but a paper gown as she waited for the QM to return with some clothing for her. The ship, she was aware, had a predetermined temperature of seventy two degrees, but she'd had a literal chill since waking up which she assumed was probably due to the twenty seven years of sleep and no movement. Basically, her body temperature was low from inactivity and lack of circulation. Doing her best not to quiver, she continued to wait patiently...while trying to hold her gown together in the back with one hand and conceal the bulge of her belly in the front with the other. Both tasks were seemingly impossible.

"Well hello," a female voice said from behind her. "You look like a newbie."

Adrian turned to see who was addressing her and found herself facing a voluptuous blonde woman. The word "voluptuous" came to mind immediately, as the woman had the front of her blue jumpsuit unzipped very low and her breasts

were all but visible. And to make the matter of her chest size even more obvious, her suit looked like it was at least two sizes too small.

“You just get pulled out of cryo?”

“Umm, yeah...I’m from third shift.”

“Wow, you got the jackpot huh...an extra three years, yay for you, huh?” Just then the woman apparently realized she hadn’t introduced herself. “Sorry, I’m Deidra Peters...Colony Corp civil service...one of only twenty five.”

“Adrian Powell, US Navy...nice to meet you.”

The two women shook hands and despite her attempts not to look at the woman’s chest, she found herself unable to avoid it. When Deidra realized it, she giggled and glanced back down into the QM’s storage room to see if anyone was back there that could see her. Satisfied that the QM wasn’t able to view them, she reached up and quickly unzipped her top completely and whipped her breasts into full view.

“Nice huh? They tend to get me in more trouble than they’re worth sometimes...like now.”

Adrian was unable to respond. The woman’s tits were massive and extraordinarily real in shape, definitely not the result of cosmetic implants of any nature.

“Apparently my military supervisor, one Major Carnahan, seems to think my jumper is a little too small. In truth he’s married and his wife is in cryo...so I think it’s more too small for him, rather than me.” She giggled again and stuffed her boobs back into her suit, fighting somewhat to get the front zipped up again. “So anyways, he made me come down and get a set of new jumpers.”

“Well I can see why,” Adrian commented as she tried to reel her eyes back into her head. The inevitable question was also

brewing, but she was hesitant to ask, not wanting to sound overly lesbian.

“And yes...they’re real,” the other woman asserted as if she could hear the thought running through Adrian’s head. “Well mostly. I had cosmetic adipostic treatments a few years ago...I was like an A-cup...so I had them suck some fat out of my butt and inject it into my tits...got me a solid C-cup right...and then I come out of Cryo after first shift is done...and boom...I got these puppies, how crazy is that?”

“All I come out with is a potbelly,” Adrian admitted hesitantly as she eyed the woman’s chest again, wishing it was her own. “Must be nice to get fat in the titties.”

“Show me,” Deidra insisted. “Nobody’s looking...let me check you out, girl...hell you done seen what I got anyway!”

“Gross, no...don’t think so,” she refused and looked at the woman as if she’d lost her mind.

“Well I can see it anyway...your paper sack ain’t doing much to hide it, babe...so what are you like second trimester or what?”

“WHAT?!” she exclaimed.

“Oh sorry...you probably don’t get that...I forgot you’re a newbie. All the women on board...we have a running joke about the bellies. Almost every bitch comes out of cryo with either a chunky butt or a plumpy belly, and the bellies make you look pregnant so we compare sizes by trimesters or whatever. So you look like you’re probably four or five months along...get it?”

“That’s fucked up...”

“Yeah, but we get bored a lot and you will too, trust me. After while we start making up shit just to have something to talk about. Newbies always get freaked out ‘cause they don’t know what the hell we’re all talking about.”

"How many newbies are there?"

"Oh please...I have no idea...there's been a lot the last year or so with all the so-called accidents going on here and there."

"Yeah I heard about that," Adrian admitted.

"Well my best advice girl...is learn to be weird...it'll keep you sane longer, trust me. You try keeping all uptight and normal and you'll lose your fucking mind, and you got thirteen years ahead of you...more than most."

"Well thanks, I'll keep that in mind."

"Where the fuck is the QM...have you even seen him?"

"Yeah...he's back there somewhere."

The tension in the tiny office area was beginning to become annoying after a few more minutes and Adrian simply began to feel that she was going to have to make small talk to kill the time.

"So...ummm...your boobs got bigger huh?"

"Always gets back to the tits...I love it," Deidra giggled again and turned to look at Adrian. "Sorry, I had no tits most of my life and now I got these and I just love the attention...I don't know what else to say about it. And yeah women look as much if not more than the men do."

"So what caused that? Do you know?"

"Well the cryo-techs think it had something to do with my injections...I had abnormally larger amounts of adipose tissue...fat... in my tits y'know...so they think when the Creep hit me, my body just started sticking the excess fat where I already had fat at. Of course they're not doctors and truthfully the ship doc has no clue at all...he didn't even wanna hypothesize about it."

"What...hypothesize?"

"Oh, hypothesize...guess...everybody on board uses the shortened version of the word. Stupid military dicks don't ever

wanna say they guessed about something, so they say they hypothesize on it...gets cut down to hypothize."

"Oh...so...how big are they?"

"Honestly," and the woman looked down at her chest and hefted her boobs through the tight fabric. "I have no fucking clue. Nobody wears bras on board...and I haven't ever bothered to bug the QM for one to see."

"Nobody wears bras?"

"Non-essential materials...that's what the mission planners called it. Bras require fabric and metal. Do you stock the ship with spare parts or use up space for cases of brassieres?"

The argument made sense and Adrian had to admit there was a great deal of logic to that. She'd much rather them be able to fix the ship if it broke...much more so than she'd worry about her girls jiggling around.

"Yeah, I guess extra support ain't gonna help you much if your ass is floating in space dead, huh?"

"True that," Deidra agreed. "But for what it's worth, I did manage to get the QM to let me use his tape measure once...and my each tit is twenty five fucking inches in circumference...and both of them together weigh eight pounds."

"You're gonna have back problems...you know that right?"

"Yeah probably...but for now, I got sore pussy problems... 'cause I'm getting too much dick," she asserted with another of her weird giggles.

"Too-shay," Adrian admitted, ripping on the French phrase.

"Oh it's you...twenty five...lem'me guess...bigger jumpers?" the QM finally emerged from his stockroom with a stack of green jumpsuits in hand for Adrian. The swarthy little man was balding and greasy looking and could have easily been at home in a bad porn movie.

"Twenty five?" Adrian said aloud as she turned to look at her new friend...but the blonde was already blushing.

"Nickname...thanks to QM here...everybody ends up with a nickname of some sort," she admitted.

"Most get stuck with mission or job oriented names...like me, I'm just fucking QM...but her...well she likes to brag too much so she got hung with twenty five," the Quartermaster added. "Here's your shit...I sized'em up a little, so they gonna be baggy on you...but most times newbies get bigger, so anyway...save you a trip to see me later."

"Thanks...I think...okay...yeah," Adrian sputtered as she was forced to let go of her paper dress in the back to use both hands in gathering her suits.

"Down the hall...take the first corridor on your right...third door on your left...that's crew management. They'll set you up with quarters and anything else you need," the QM explained.

"I'll show her...just upsize me and I'll be back in a little bit, QM," Deidra volunteered.

"Damn...is her room still sealed off?" the Marine Sergeant grumbled to his Navy accomplice.

"Yeah...electrical accident...remember? It was messy, didn't find her for a while...I don't think they realized she was missing... well she was rooming to herself and all," and the Navy man's voice trailed off as the Marine shot him a dirty look for discussing need-to-know information in front of a newbie.

"So we got a whole room that's unusable...where the fuck am I supposed to house her replacement?"

"You can put her with me...I got nobody in my room...my bunker had her accident somewhere else," Deidra chimed in from the open doorway that lead into the crew management

office. "She wasn't real essential so they never replaced her...put her with me if you want to."

"You're civie...she's Navy, m'am," the Marine replied. "That's not standard procedure."

"Does it really matter?" The Navy aid asked...only to have a dirty look shot at him again by the Marine.

"Yes it fucking matters, she's civie and she's a fucking Navy bitch ...I mean damn...what fucking part of that do you not follow?"

The Navy guy rolled his eyes, stood up, and walked out into the hall past Deidra, disappearing down the main corridor.

"You eat, sleep and shit with the same people day after day with no breaks and you eventually end up acting like a married couple," Deidra whispered quietly to Adrian as she stepped up behind her.

"I heard that," the Marine popped off.

"So is your old lady right or what?" Deidra popped right back.

The Marine Sergeant sighed and began typing on his display as if it were the enemy and his fingers weapons. "What room you in?"

"Deck N, Section 4, Room 12," she replied.

"Do you have any problem with this, Petty Officer Powell?"

"None sir...I'd rather bunk with her than in the dead girl's room if it's alright."

"I am not sir, I am Master Sergeant, Petty Officer Powell, and I will assign you to bunk with Miss Peters in the civilian section of Deck N. You have any problems, you let me know."

"Thank you Master Sergeant."

“He’s one of the hard asses...we’ve been on shift for seven fucking years...I mean you’d think these guys would lighten up some, but some of them just get worse. Some of them are wound up tighter than when they started...you’ll see them every morning doing PT and running up and down the halls. It’s insane.”

Adrian was only half paying attention as her friend went on and on about the military people. She was beginning to wonder if accepting the woman’s invitation to live with her was a bad idea by the time they reached N-deck.

“I don’t mean to be rude, but I sort of need to get some rest or something...and a shower would be nice...I smell horrible.”

“No deodorant in the tanks, yeah...you’re pretty ripe,” Deidra agreed as she keyed in the access code to their room. “Well welcome home...like it or lump it.”

The room was extremely small. Two bunks were mounted on the walls, one above the other with a small ladder attached on the far end of them to allow climbing to the top bed. Beyond the bunks, the room had only one desk with a computer terminal one floor mounted chair in front of it. Nothing else decorated the room at all.

“Sparse,” Adrian commented off-handedly as she stepped in and Deidra slid the door back into a closed position and locked it.

“Can’t bring anything with you...can’t write on the walls...I’ve actually walked into the wrong room before and not even realized it for a while.” She walked around Adrian and slapped her hand on the top bunk. “I sleep high...so you’re stuck on bottom. If you find a pillow case hanging from the door handle, don’t come in...that’s how we tell bunkers that we’re busy.”

“Bunkers?”

“Bunk mates...everybody just says bunkers...sounds less gay.”

“And you do this a lot?”

“Oh shit...are you a virgin?”

Adrian blushed. It wasn't the first time she'd been accused of it. And she wasn't...she'd gotten busy more than once, but admitting with whom wasn't something she cared to talk about.

“No...lost it when I was still in school thank you,” she replied, fighting hard to contain her blushing.

“Oh now...damn...how old were you?”

“NOT old enough, thanks,” she responded and smiled sarcastically, hoping to nip the conversation in the butt before it got started.

“Oh c'mon...I've heard everyone's stories a hundred times...you're like new meat...c'mon and feed me dammit...I'm dying here.”

“I was fourteen...I had a crush on an older guy and I was stupid ...not much else to say about it. And it wasn't anything to write home about. And I haven't had a boyfriend since then.”

“Are you a muff diver?”

“What?”

“A rug muncher...clam digger...a lesbian...damn?”

“NOOOO,” Adrian denied a bit louder than she'd intended.

“Oh...you got be what...like eighteen...nineteen?”

“I'm twenty thank you...why you wanna know?”

The blonde giggled her stupid laugh and sat down on the bottom bunk before answering.

“I'm not real particular myself sometimes...I like girls as much as guys...sometimes better. So I wanted to know so I wouldn't hit on you or some shit and piss you off. Not cool if we're rooming together for the next three years.”

Adrian was aghast. How should she even respond to that if at all. Had the woman asked her to live with her because she wanted to get her pants? She had, after all, asked to see her belly which would have meant pulling her gown up and she had started their meeting by whipping her own boobs out.

"I'm not...I mean not that I think there's anything wrong with it, but I haven't ever messed with women. I like penis, y'know?"

"That's cool...you're off limits then."

Her curiosity was up by this point and she found herself asking something she knew wasn't a good idea.

"So if I had been...would you have hit on me?"

"Maybe," Deidra replied with a ridiculous grin on her face. "I think you just got a case of boob envy though, am I right?"

Adrian smirked and blushed.

"Yeah, I do...you are pure wrong for those things!"

"I know but I just love'em so much," she said, as she leaned back on the lower bunk and unzipped her jumper. "See how big and delicious they are," she added as she pulled her oversized tits out and began to pull at the nipples roughly.

"Umm...should I go and--"

"Do you wanna go...or do you wanna stay and watch me play with my tits?" Deidra cut her off just before she hefted one massive breast upwards and sucked its nipple into her mouth.

Part of her wanted to run, but the other part of her really was excited by the other woman's breasts. They were just so huge and beautiful and she'd always wanted a gigantic pair herself and being so tiny and petite her whole life, she'd considered herself lucky to have B-cups.

"I think...maybe I'll stay," she whispered as she inched her way over to the chair in front of the desk and sat down. Her legs still weren't working like they were supposed to and

watching Deidra was making them tremble even more than they were already.

"I don't like relationships," Deidra said as she pulled her own nipple from her lips. "I tried it for a while the first year or two and I just eventually realized it was too boring. I mean you can't date and you can't get married...all you got is talking and fucking and eventually both just run dry."

"So what...you just like people to watch you beat your beaver or how does this work?"

Deidra exploded into laughter and flopped over to one side on the bunk. "Oh shit...beat the beaver, really?"

"I'm from Alabama...back up off of me," Adrian retorted with a grin of her own.

"Well I don't know...I just like to do whatever suits me at the time, it's weird I know...but everybody on board was tested prior to leaving, so it's not like you can catch anything and well sex is the only thing that keeps me from taking a power cord to my own neck most days. And yeah, after a while it really does get that boring."

"Okay...so right now you want me to watch you play with your own titties...alright...that's fine I guess."

"No," Deidra replied. "I want you to show me your belly."

"What?"

"Hey you got titty envy...I got belly envy, okay?"

"Are you serious?"

"Women get the creep worse than men...most of these fucking jerkoff Marines come out of stasis looking like they went in...and if they don't, they PT themselves back into rock-hard war machines in a matter of weeks. But the women...they all come out with these cute little potbellies and lovehandles...and I didn't get none. I mean I got the twenty fives here...and they're awesome let me tell you...but I didn't put on weight

anywhere else at all and I sort of feel like the odd man out sometimes.”

Adrian looked at her with unblinking eyes and an expression of sheer disbelief...unable to even formulate a response.

“Don’t look at me like that...it’s true, okay. And I really like the third trimester bitches...you’re gonna totally freak when you see one. Most come out with ten to fifteen pounds like you...but some come out with like these huge honking guts on’em. There’s this one bitch up on R-deck...her nickname is Prego...I kid you not. And she’s like skinny all over except for this huge fucking belly. And every time I see her, I swear it looks bigger. And I would kill to see her fat ass naked. It’s weird I know...but she’s different...and it makes me hot.”

“I put on twelve pounds,” Adrian admitted as she reached for her jumpsuit zipper. “Don’t laugh at my nipples either...I got like really big nipples okay.”

As her suit top came down, she pulled her arms free of the sleeves and rolled it completely down past her hips.

“Oh wow...nips...I thought you meant like...areola...but wow...yeah, you got some perky bitches.” It was Deidra whose eyes were wide with excitement now.

“Thanks.”

“Hey you...quite sucking it in...I can tell you know,” Deidra scolded her.

Blushing, Adrian relaxed her muscles and allowed her belly to pooch out unrestricted.

“There, you happy now?”

“Mmm...better,” the other woman admitted with a sly smirk. “I look forward to watching you grow.”

“Do what?”

“Who was your cryo-tech? Did she tell you that the Creep don’t fade for a while...and that you’ll actually gain more after you come out?”

Adrian sighed. “Yeah, she did...dammit.”

Deidra half-giggled again and rolled onto her back on the bed.

“You swell up like Prego and I may have to let you beat my beaver for me.”

“Can I get a shower please? I’m starting to annoy myself with my funky smell.”

“Yeah, c’mon...I’ll show you where the showers are.”

Adrian stood up and started to put her jumpsuit back on, but the other woman stopped her verbally.

“Please...N-deck is all women...and the showers are communal so don’t worry about it. C’mon...everything you need is there. They even have air blowers that dry you off afterwards.”

Walking down the hall topless was interesting to say the least. No one they passed seemed to notice her. Most gawked without fear at Deidra’s titans as they flopped and jostled from side to side while she walked, but nobody appeared concerned at all with her. In fact, they passed a good number of women who were all but naked themselves, and most, as Deidra had mentioned, were sporting round bellies and plump torsos. They reminded her of birds...all top and thin legs. It gave new meaning to the word “chick” so often used for women.

As they walked, she began to realize her friend’s mammaries weren’t the only things jiggling. Glancing down at her own torso, she realized her plump little gut was shimmying and quivering as she moved. With each step, it would bounce

and then undulate. Without intention, she found herself trying to suck it in, but with each woman she passed, her comfort grew. Hell she wasn't even the fattest bitch here and in fact she seemed to be in the lower spectrum of sizes.

Relax, she told herself. You don't have to impress anybody. It's not like you got fat from being lazy...no one is going to judge you. Relax and let it hang out.

With great determination, she forced her stomach muscles to release and to her horror, her tummy seemed to expand at least another inch or two further out than it had been...and it's little bounces morphed into more intense jiggling.

Oh shit...that kind of feels good, she realized. Just pretend it's a big titty...and let it swing! Where the thought had come from she hadn't a clue but picturing a big nipple where her belly button was made her laugh out loud for some reason.

"What you laughing at, Tiny?"

"Is that gonna be my nickname...the El-tee called me that earlier?"

"Probably...it fits...you're like the size of a skinny midget. Were your parents dwarves or something?"

"NOOO," she answered loudly. "My father is six foot thank you and so are all three of my brothers."

"You musta' got all the midget genes," Deidra taunted her. "So what was you laughing about...how all these bitches stare at my tits or what?"

"Actually I noticed that, but no...I was...well," and she drew herself a little closer to her friend as they walked. Practically whispering, she continued, "I sort of like the way my belly feels when I'm walking...it bounces like my boobs art'to."

"I should tell you something..." Deidra began, but they had finally reached the showers at the end of N-deck corridor and she had to activate the door mechanism. Once they were

inside, she leaned close and whispered, "The guys on board...most of them have just sort of gotten accustomed to the bellies and honestly it's become a contest among the Marines especially...to conquer the bitch with the biggest belly."

"So that's why you got belly envy," Adrian said with a wry smile.

"Oh fuck off...maybe," Deidra admitted reluctantly. "About two years ago, I went through this dry spell where I couldn't get any dick at all...and I actually tried to get fat...I was eating anything I could lay my hands on and my tits got bigger...it was just annoying. I couldn't believe it till I went and got QM's tape measure...that's when I found out they were twenty five inches around. So I stopped that immediately. So yeah, it's sucks ass. All the women hate me...and yet all the men ignore me after a while."

The shower room was a long rectangle dotted with single shower nozzles along the sides of both of the outer walls. The back wall had what could only be described as small slots carved into the wall with giant air vents in the top.

"Shower is self-explanatory...the nooks in the back are the dryer vents. They kick on automatically when you step into the nook and will kick off when you step out. They are loud as fuck...be prepared for an ear rupture. I always cover my ears when I go in."

"I guess towels fell under non-essential materials huh?"

"You are correct Madame," Deidra answered as she bent over and peeled out of her jumpsuit.

"No underwear either I guess, huh?"

"Fucking Marines...they don't wear underwear so I guess they don't think anybody else needs any either. So no, we got no drawers aboard."

“Er-hrm...what do we do during that certain time of the month?”

“Oh please babe...that shot they give you shuts you completely down. Honestly I wonder if that hormone injection isn’t what makes us all gain weight. I’ve read some shit on that stuff. But if you don’t report for your shot when it’s due, they come get you with a gun, so don’t fuck around with it.”

“Glad to know...she said it was just birth control,” Adrian stated with a look of sudden annoyance as she disrobed as well.

“Lot of things they don’t tell you,” her friend added.

“Such as?”

“Down on C-Deck...there are sections that don’t appear on the ship’s manifest...like whole rooms that have no inventories at all. Same thing down in the storage decks, A and B.”

“How do you know that?”

“I’m a computer technician...a programmer. I work on the various systems aboard the ship...the stuff the crew can’t fix themselves...and I get bored a lot...so I poke around.”

“You hack?”

“I can...hack...if I need to, yes.”

Deidra was suddenly darting her eyes upwards to the corner as if to point Adrian’s attention at something up on the wall. She immediately noted the gesture and stilled herself before looking over in the direction indicated.

“What?”

“The ship has an advanced A.I. system that monitors all the ship’s systems and security. I work on the less centralized segments of his bios, sometimes related to observation and data accumulation that can be utilized by security and shipboard engineering.”

Obviously she was speaking in general but the gist of her intent came through like a brightly shining beacon. The ship

was wired all over for security and everything was monitored by a central computer system...apparently even in the showers.

"Er-hrm...so where does one go to pee?"

"Oh there's a closet in our room with a chute."

"What?"

"Showers need water...toilets do not. So they build one giant shower room in each deck section...and just run a single air chute pipe for toilets to each room. Running showers and dryers would have been expensive and space consuming...also excessive water use is frowned upon. It has to be recycled and nobody wants to bathe in poop water, cleaned or not."

"So we have to drop mud in an air pipe?"

"Did you sleep through orientation?"

"Probably...they told me my memory would improve in a few days...so it's possible I just don't remember most of this shit."

"Yeah, I remember wandering around kind of lost for a few days myself after waking up," Deidra admitted. "Oh booyah! Look," she added, elbowing Adrian in the left arm and nodding her head back toward the entrance door.

Twisting around, she looked at the new woman who'd just entered the shower room...or more directly, she looked at the woman's big fat belly as it flopped and quivered.

"Total niner...look at it," Deidra whispered as she stared unabashedly at the woman as she approached them.

"Who's this?" the big woman asked as she stopped beside them and eyed Adrian.

"This is my new bunker, Adrian...Adrian, this is Nurse Romero, she works in the infirmary...her belly usually works a few feet from her."

"Ha, ha, twenty five...you just jealous," the darker skinned woman replied as she slapped her belly and made it quiver.

“Everybody just calls me Romeo...you’ll end up with a nickname too at some point.”

“So far we’re banking on Tiny, actually,” Deidra inserted as she continued to stare like a horny schoolboy at the woman’s big belly.

“Tiny now maybe...but you see this thing,” and the woman shook her belly roughly with both hands for emphasis. “I came out no bigger than you, babe...no bigger than you.” She immediately erupted into laughter and punched Deidra in the arm. “Nahhh, I’m just fucking with you sister...I was about twice your size when I came out...now the ass here...I had that going in, y’know...but...well the guys seem to like the bellies...so I just ran with it.”

“Quite messing with her...she just came out of the tank like two hours ago...beat it...got take a shower you stink.”

“Wasn’t what you said when you was eating my pussy, bitch,” Romeo popped back with a thick Hispanic accent, followed by a Rosie Perez mouth click and finger wave before jiggling her fatness off toward a shower nozzle.

“Don’t ask...I told you I got it bad,” Deidra added as she turned, blushing, and stepped off toward a nozzle herself.

The water felt good as it poured down onto her skin. It was hard to imagine she hadn’t felt liquid in twenty seven years. It was shocking to her to even try and comprehend it.

“So you said you talked to a Lieutenant earlier...which one?”

Deidra’s voice startled her. She’d said nothing to her for the last few minutes since the interaction with the Hispanic nurse.

“Umm...Bolen...Lieutenant Bolen...big dude.”

“Bolen? Oh yeah...he’s big in more ways than one, lem’me tell you babe.”

“Do I want to hear this or not?”

“It’s a foot long if it’s an inch bitch...so yeah, you wanna hear it... and feel it...and suck it...and have your ass whipped with it.”

“I gotta work with him...thanks...appreciate that.”

“Bitch...you need to work ON him...that’s what you need to do.”

“Yeah...well a big dick ain’t all that,” she retorted despite what she truly felt on the matter.

“Says you,” her friend with the over-sized tits exclaimed as she turned to head for a blower stall.

Somehow she had the distinct impression Lieutenant Bolen and she were going to be more than just co-workers. She’d always had an undeniable desire, well truly it was more of an uncontrollable lust, for large penises. So uncontrollable was it that it’d cost her the very flower of her youth. Her utter fascination with a large penis has inevitably caused the loss of her virginity and left her stained with the shame of having lost it with a boy she should never have been touching. But it was a sin she’d committed and over the years she’d come to terms with it to an extent, but she knew it was still the reason she had no male relationships as an adult. She always felt deprived if a man wasn’t excessively large and would lose interest in them even before they’d get to actual sex in their relationship. So the occasional date and make-out session was about as far as she ever got with men. But now that she knew the Lieutenant was packing mondo-cock, she suddenly found herself enthralled with the idea of a sexual relationship. She was now looking forward to getting to work...and not just on electrical wiring.

To be continued...